



Congressman Tim Bishop

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BISHOP: HEAD START SHOULD NOT HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN TRANSPORTATION AND TEACHING

House passes Head Start bill with Bishop amendment to help fund local transportation

Washington, DC—Congressman Tim Bishop (NY-1), a member of the House Committee on Education and Labor, applauded the passage this week of the "Improving Head Start Act of 2007," which included his amendment to enable Head Start programs on Long Island and other areas to direct funds to cover transportation shortfalls.

“This bill continues to build on Head Start’s successes by ensuring that kids are prepared for school by improving teacher and classroom quality, strengthening the focus on school readiness, increasing accountability and boosting coordination,” said Bishop during debate on the House floor. “Research finds that low-income children who attend Head Start make significant gains in learning and enter school better prepared than children who do not attend the program.”

The Head Start bill would expand access by authorizing \$450 million in new funding for fiscal year 2008 which would provide up to 10,000 more children access to the program.

The Bishop amendment allows Head Start programs to use up to 10% of their quality improvement funds for transportation costs.

“I offered this amendment in response to concerns from Long Islanders that many Head Start programs are being forced to choose between providing transportation to children or sacrificing the quality of their programs,” said Bishop. “That is a decision no Head Start program should be forced to make.”

“I am truly delighted that Congressman Bishop has been successful in his efforts to assist the children of our Head Start programs with funding for bus transportation,” said Debrah Garcia, CEO/Executive Director of the Long Island Head Start and Early Head Start programs. “His hard work will not only assist us with bus transportation for our children in need, but will allow us to continue to provide high-quality child and family development services to our children and families. We hope that efforts to restore Head Start funding will continue as we strive to improve the quality of living for our at-risk children and families on Long Island.”

Head Start centers have been serving Suffolk County since 1966.

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